



Furry fun turns to horror in Gremlins

Beware of cute-looking creatures with two furry little paws and eyes that are wide and seemingly innocent.

They could lure you to the Forum from next Thursday with your sweet, innocent child to see Gremlins (NRC).

But halfway through the film the cute furry balls of fun perform a slavering, slimy, belching metamorphosis.

The publicity machine calls them cute, clever, mischievous, intelligent and dangerous.

Add to that, evil, nasty, murderous, vindictive, frightening and downright unpleasant.

Gremlins is a combination of ET, the Muppets and the Horrific Wotsit from Outer Space with the horrific wotsit definitely having the edge on lovable ole ET.

Outcry

In the US, where the film was one of the biggest money-makers of the year, there was such an outcry over the PG rating (similar to our NRC) that the ratings board considered creating a new category 'moderately violent.'

Beware, too, the Steven Spielberg label on the film. He bought the script but then let others get on with shaping the film.

For most of the 23 weeks of production he was out of the country working on Indiana Jones.

The man who has done most to shape it is the aptly named Joe Dante, for in his hands the gremlins are evil little devils.

You will need to be able to laugh at scenes like an elderly couple being mown down by Gremlins chortling as they playfully drive an excavator through their house.

Not that the film starts out this way.

Singer Hoyt Axton is a splendidly eccentric inventor who obtains a mogwai as a Christmas present for son Billy. Christened Gizmo, the mogwai is a living soft-toy with an even softer heart.

The humor is delightful and even when things start going wrong, it is still good family fun.

But when Gizmo's offspring turn into Gremlins they are a nightmare, certainly without a heart between them.

Even the film's blurb talks of harrowing moments and dark humor.

Spielberg says it was the most bizarre project he has been associated with.

But it is very cleverly done.

Both mogwais and gremlins assume lives of their own without a string or hand being hinted at.

The acting is first class and Jerry Goldsmith's music is suitably impish.



GIZMO . . . the cuddly mogwai with evil offspring.



ZACH GALLIGAN . . . as Billy in Gremlins.